

# URBAN WILDERNESS AND PARKS

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Mishawaka, June 1996; updated Fall, 2002

**Objective:** To increase student awareness of the need for and the problems of wilderness areas which are located close to urban centers.

## **National Geography Standards:**

3 = How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth's surface.

4 = The physical and human characteristics of places.

14 = How humans modify the physical environment.

18 = How to apply Geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

**Indiana Social Studies Academic Standards:** (the activity can be enhanced to further address several government and economic standards as well at each grade level)

Kindergarten – 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 5.2, and 5.3

Fourth Grade – 4.1.12, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, and 3.10

Eighth Grade – 8.2.4, 3.8, 3.9, 3.11, and 5.3

High School World Geography – 1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 2.2, 2.3, 3.5, 3.7, 3.10, 4.17, 4.19, 5.1, 5.9, 5.10, 6.11, 6.12

## **Materials Required:**

- Indiana state road maps
- one Road Atlas per student, almanacs and Geographic dictionaries
- blank maps of Indiana which indicate county boundaries
- blank maps of the United States which have state boundaries
- large map of Indiana, atlases of Indiana, state park information

## **Procedure:**

1. Survey the class by asking students to relate their experiences with “wilderness” or parks:
  - a. What parks have you visited: local, state or national?
  - b. What do you remember most about your visits to parks? What are your most vivid memories of your visits?
  - c. Did you enjoy your visits to parks? Why or why not?
  - d. What would have made your visit more fun?
2. Discuss “what” is wilderness in small groups for about ten minutes; have students read wilderness quotes that you have accumulated from outside resources.
3. Students discuss their concept of wilderness, write down their perceptions and report to the class.
4. Ask students which of the following is “wilderness”: desert, ocean, ice cap, Yellowstone, state a local park.
5. Discuss as a class “why” so many people want to go to wilderness areas? Is it important to a person’s quality of life?

6. Utilizing the Indiana road map and the Indiana map with county boundaries have the students:
  - a. locate and identify cities of 50,000 or more people,
  - b. locate and identify any state or national parks in Indiana, and
  - c. locate and identify county parks in your home county.
7. Utilizing the United States Road Atlas and the United States map with state boundaries have the students:
  - a. identify and locate on the United States map cities of 500,000 or more people, and
  - b. identify and locate all National Parks and National Forests.
8. Discuss as a class “why” the parks are located where they are; is there a correlation between parks and urban areas?  
What is the correlation between where parks are and the landscape? Could the land be used for something else?
9. Invite a local park guide or naturalist to visit your classroom and talk about wilderness, the number of visitors annually, peak time of park use, major problems and environmental damage/management.
10. Show the video by the National Geographic Society entitled “Yellowstone”.
11. Visit a local park (county, city, state or national).
12. On a blank map of Indiana, have each student locate the site for a new park and explain “why” they located  
the new park “where” they did. Data from the Indiana Division of Nature Preserves, U.S. Census Bureau, and local  
GIS agencies with county or city databases. The Indiana Geological Survey also has dynamic information and maps.

## **WORK SHEET FOR URBAN WILDERNESS AND PARKS LESSON**

While on a field experience to a local, city, state or national park, you will complete the following survey and turn the survey in the next school day.

NAME:

COURSE:

1. Why is the park located where it is? Think about the surrounding area and the landscape features or historical features.
2. Who financed the park? Who maintains the park?

3. Where do most of the people who utilize the park live?
4. What are some of the non-natural (human built environment) features of the park?
5. What are the activities that are provided by the park? Include activities for every season.
6. List three examples of environmental damage that you noticed in the park.
7. What restrictions are placed upon human activities while in the park? Should other restrictions be imposed?  
(ie, no pets unleashed, no loud music, no alcohol,...)
8. What suggestions do you have that might improve the park?
9. What is the approximate number of people who live within fifty miles of the park?
10. What did this area look like 25-30 years ago? Was it a park?
11. What is the primary purpose of this park and for whom was it intended?
12. As the population increases, what will be the impact on the park?